

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Russian olive added to designated weed list

The Wyoming Board of Agriculture has voted to approve the Wyoming Weed and Pest Council's resolution to add Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia* L.) to the state designated weed list.

"Weed and Pest districts have become increasingly aware of the impacts Russian olive presents along riparian corridors," Doug Vickery, president of the Wyoming Weed and Pest Council, said. "In some areas, such as the Big Horn Basin, the tree has moved out of the riparian areas and has impacted rangeland production. The Weed and Pest Council's intent is to not to start cutting down desired windbreaks, shelterbelts or ornamental trees, but to focus our attention on areas where it has escaped cultivation."

Russian olive is a non-native tree that can out-compete native vegetation, interfere with natural plant succession and nutrient cycling, and tax water reserves, similar to the problems salt cedar presents. By adding Russian olive to the list, it restricts the sale, distribution and transportation of the weed into the state.

Spencer Ellis, chairman of the Wyoming Board of Agriculture, stressed the importance of controlling Russian olive.

"The Board of Agriculture agreed with the resolution unanimously with the understanding that the districts' priority is not to remove desirable trees, but rather to focus on areas where it has escaped," Ellis said. "The addition of Russian olive to the state designated list is a proactive approach that will, at the very least, assist in educating the public on the invasive issues the tree presents."

Residents can talk to their local Weed and Pest districts or contact the Wyoming Department of Agriculture at (307) 777-6585 for more information.

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